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Governor to renew executive orders around gun violence and substance misuse

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SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham will renew executive orders declaring gun violence a public health emergency on Friday. The governor's multi-pronged strategy is demonstrating progress as shown on the state's gun violence dashboard. The renewal extends the emergency to Dec. 1, 2023, ensuring that progress continues.

Highlights from the updated data from Albuquerque and Bernalillo County since Sept. 8, 2023, include:

- 1,441 arrests
- 86 guns seized
- 2,511 traffic citations issued

In addition, no guns have been found on Albuquerque Public Schools campuses since Oct. 5, 2023, down from six guns the prior month.

"The work of local and state partners, especially law enforcement, in the last two months is yielding real results for the Albuquerque community. But now is no time to slow down, and we will continue our efforts to eradicate gun violence," said Gov. Lujan Grisham. "This executive order sends a clear message that the safety and wellbeing of residents are our top priorities. We stand united in our resolve to combat gun violence and protect our communities."

Gov. Lujan Grisham initially declared a state of public emergency on Sept. 7, 2023, and her administration swiftly took action to address the crisis. However, after careful consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Health, it has been determined that the situation necessitates a renewed declaration to safeguard public health, safety, and welfare.

"Gun violence has become a significant public health concern in New Mexico, leaving behind tragic consequences, including homicide, suicide, and unintentional injuries," said **Patrick Allen**, secretary for New Mexico Department of Health. "The heartbreaking stories of lives lost, and families shattered by gun violence in our state emphasize the urgency of our efforts to combat this public health crisis."

In her executive order, Gov. Lujan Grisham ordered a coordinated response to the public health

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emergency involving the Department of Health, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and Department of Public Safety.

The public health orders direct New Mexico State Police to host gun buyback events. Three events are being held Saturday in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Española.

"These are opportunities for our communities to come together and make a real impact on gun safety," said **Troy Weisler**, Chief of the New Mexico State Police. "We aim to reduce the risks associated with firearms by providing a safe, anonymous way to surrender unwanted weapons."

The gun buyback events will take place on Nov. 4, 2023, from 8 a.m. through 2 p.m. at the following locations:

- **Albuquerque:** Expo New Mexico at 300 San Pedro Gate 6 (south of Lomas)
- **Las Cruces:** New Mexico Game and Fish at 2715 E. Northrise Dr.
- **Española:** Robert "Gordy" Vigil Regional Sportsplex at 2000 Industrial Park Rd.

This initiative provides an opportunity for individuals to anonymously surrender unwanted guns and firearms. In return, participants will receive Visa and/or American Express gift cards. No questions will be asked about the ownership of the firearms or their origin. The objective of these buyback events is to prevent unwanted or unneeded weapons from causing harm or being used to commit acts of violence.

Buyback event details:

- \$200.00 Visa and/or American Express gift card for handguns
- \$300.00 Visa and/or American Express gift card for rifles, shotguns, and assault weapons
- Firearms may be functional or non-functional

The governor will also renew the executive order around substance misuse. The updated executive orders will not have any changes from the prior versions and keep the current public health orders on gun violence and substance misuse in place.

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